



ARARAT

HYE LIGHTS

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Spring 2011

Vehanoush Tavitian Celebrates a Monumental Birthday

By Debbie Avedian

On Feb. 8, 2011 Family and Friends of Vehanoush Tavitian gathered at the Ararat Assisted Living Dining room to celebrate her monumental centennial birthday. She was adorned with a lovely necklace and a very special hat. The staff and residents describe her as being strong, alert, having a great sense of humor, and being extremely appreciative of her active life at the Home. One of the activities Mrs. Tavitian enjoys is participating in sing along and looks forward to Thursday afternoon of "Kef Time" and Saturdays with pianist, Garine.



Vehanoush Tavitian (Setrakian) was born on February 8, 1911 in Konya in the Central Anatolia Region of Turkey. She attended the local Armenian school until 1915 when her parents along with her five sisters and brother were forced by the Turks to suddenly leave their home and march to detention camps in neighboring Turkish cities. She was never to see her father again! The men were separated from the women and

her father was killed. In 1918 Mrs. Tavitian returned to Konya and lived there until 1922 when she and her family were exiled and driven to Iskenderun located on the eastern Mediterranean coast of Anatolia. Along their grueling trail her beloved sister was killed.

The Tavitians who were once one of the wealthiest families in Konya were now reduced to bribing Turkish soldiers with gold hidden in their clothes in exchange for their freedom. Her family was allowed to escape and after

walking several days, they reached Beirut, Lebanon. Here she continued her education and in 1928 married Boghos Tavitian. Vehanoush and Boghos had four children: Armine, Alex, Mary and Hratch.

They were happily married and had a wonderful family life until the tragic death of her husband in 1956 as a result of an illness. In 1962 she lost her precious youngest son, Hratch due to a car accident. Although devastated, Vehanoush with her strong will to survive continued to be a strong matriarch and took pride in caring for her children by cooking, knitting, embroidering, and making all their clothes.

In 1978, as a consequence of the Lebanese Civil War, she found it necessary to move with her three children to Los Angeles. Today she is blessed with 9 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren who celebrate and value her ability to rise above all obstacles she has encountered. Vehanoush has been living happily at the Ararat Home for the past 8 years.



IN THIS ISSUE

Vehanoush Tavitian Celebrates 100th Birthday!!	1
Primate Bestows "Archbishop's Award"	2
Twelfth Annual Armenian History Quiz Bowl	2
Annual Membership Meeting Inspires Confidence	2
Deukmejian Grand Ballroom is Alive and Well	3
2010-2011 MAJOR DONORS	3
CASINO NIGHT VII, Fun With Friends	3
Heard a Great Performer Lately?	4

Upcoming Events

ARARAT
Picnic
SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 25
2011

CASINO NIGHT
VIII
SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 19, 2011



Primate Bestows "Archbishop's Award" to Margo Y. Babikian, RN, MS, Executive Director Ararat Nursing Facility | *By Debbie Avedian*

November 24, 2010 was a remarkable day with very special guests visiting the Ararat Home. His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese accompanied by Rev. Fr. Dajad Dz. V. Yardemian, Archpriest Fr. Sipan Mekhsian, Archpriest Fr. Nareg Matarian, and Rev. Fr. Vazken Movsesian arrived to the Home to present Mrs. Margo Babikian with the "Archbishop's Award."

Mrs. Margo Babikian, Executive Director of Ararat Nursing Facility was bestowed the "Archbishop's Award" for her exceptional service in the nursing field, her compassion to all who surround her, her Christian spirit, her kindheartedness and for her passionate vision of the Home. The



Primate expressed his well wishes in her endeavors, good health and continued success.

Unaware that she would be receiving this award, she was stunned when she entered the resident's dining room. Her family, co-workers, volunteers, residents and their families surrounded her. Mrs. Babikian expressed her gratitude to the Primate for the "Archbishop's Award" and thanked the clergy of the Western Diocese for their gracious visits to the Home throughout the

years. She stated, "The elderly flourish with spiritual nourishment and guidance." She expressed appreciation to her co-workers for their devotion and the superb care they provide to the residents.

Twelfth Annual Armenian History Timeline Quiz Bowl Held at the Ararat Home | *By Debbie Avedian*



On April 10, 2010 eighth grade students from seven Armenian day schools in the greater Los Angeles area gathered energetically at the Ararat Home in Mission Hills to participate in the Twelfth Annual Armenian Timeline Quiz Bowl. For two hours these bright students answered questions on Armenian history and culture spanning three millennia and covering history, geography, literature, science, the arts, and religion.

For the second year in a row students from the Alfred and Marguerite Hovsepian School earned first place. Participants Christine Keshishyan, Christopher Khachadour, and Meline Topchyan proudly and enthusiastically accepted a check in the amount of \$1,000 from Chairman of the Ararat Board of Trustees, Nazar H. Ashjian, Jr. Second place award of \$750 was received by Sisters' Academy by participants Gevorg Arabyan, Nareg Bouldoukian, Shahe Kazazian, and Alex Kilissian. The Chamlian School took third place award of \$500 by participants Natasha Ayyazian, Galy Kouyoumdjian, Jacqueline Matian, and Arpineh Petrosyan.

Each of the runners up Ferrahian School, Merdinian School, the Pilibos School, and the Sahag-Mesrob School received \$250.00. All participants received trophies, mugs and an Ararat pin, generously donated by Harold Mgrublian, Vice-Chairman of the Ararat Board of Trustees.

This one of a kind event would not be possible without the dedication and hard work provided by Marilyn and Hagop Arshagouni. Marilyn Arshagouni with her wealth of knowledge of Armenian history, culture, language, literature and arts served as the remarkable quizmaster, and Hagop Arshagouni served as coordinator and emcee. We are also especially grateful to the many volunteers who helped by making this a successful event. We look forward to next year's Quiz Bowl XIII.

Annual Membership Meeting Inspires Confidence

By Cindy Kaloostian

With so much financial and political instability surrounding our community and world giving us cause for concern, the Ararat Home Annual Membership Meeting on March 13, 2011 bucked the trend with upbeat reports of excellent state and federal ratings, financial stability and exciting plans for future expansion. Board Chairman, Nazar H. Ashjian Jr., was effusive in expressing his praise of Ararat's administrators and managers. Board Treasurer, Michael Surmeian, was pleased to report that the Home has the ability to absorb expected Medi-Cal payment cuts without undermining its financial well being. Membership Chairman, Harold Mgrublian, with the able assistance of Board Executive Secretary Beatrice Malkhasian, oversaw the election of incumbent Trustees, Debbie Avedian, Judge Ruth Essegian, Ronald Nazeley, Joseph G. Ouzounian, M.D., John Vosbigian and new Trustee, Shahe Boyadjian.

Nora Hampar introduced the representatives from the Ladies Auxiliary, Ladies' Guilds and the Ararat Home Gift Shop. These devoted volunteers handed Mr. Ashjian checks totaling \$222,500 representing the proceeds of a year's fund raising. These donations are the result of hundreds of loyal volunteers working to support the continued excellence of Ararat Home of Los Angeles.

After adjournment, over 125 members enjoyed a delicious Lenten meal.

Deukmejian Grand Ballroom is Alive and Well

By Nora Hampar

The Deukmejian Ballroom continues to be a favorite destination for many wedding receptions, anniversary celebrations, organizational dinner dances and a host of other happy occasions.

The Ballroom comfortably seats as many as 525 guests for a normal setting or can appear very appropriate with as few as 150 guests with more formal seating arrangements. It includes such amenities as a large dance floor and an attractive foyer area leading to the ballroom. Many organizations return year after year for their annual events due to its elegant atmosphere.

The advantage of free parking, a safe setting for guests to arrive and depart in well lighted areas is a valuable asset. A lovely lighted fountain and two curved staircases outdoors are visible upon reaching the garden entrance. Elevators are also available for those wishing to use them to reach the second level.

With the rental of the ballroom comes many cost free services: ample tables and chairs, professional set-up for the event, dinnerware and silverware, table service pieces and an approved catering list. A large stage, microphones and sound system are provided at no additional cost. Two large terraces with spectacular city and valley views are just off the ballroom via French doors.

The ballroom has been recently redecorated with subtle textured Venetian finished walls, new carpeting, hardwood dance floor and soft coloration.

Inquiries regarding the ballroom availability, catering arrangements, fees and any other questions may be directed to the Reservation Department at the Ararat Home, Phone: **(818) 365-3000** or e-mail to www.ararathome.org.



2010-2111 MAJOR DONORS

By Cindy Kaloostian

Major donors giving \$10,000 or, in some cases much more, have trusted Ararat Home for many years. Every step of the way, from the days on Adams to the present, the Home has inspired generous people to give substantial monetary gifts to insure continued excellent care for the elderly of our community.

THE FOLLOWING BENEFACTORS ARE THE MAJOR DONORS FOR THE YEAR 2010 TO PRESENT:

Vartan Hartounian Family Trust
The Mary R. Tarakajian Trust
John and Hasmik Foundation
Roxie Kircorian
Mr. and Mrs. Henry and Louise Arklin
Mrs. Jeannette Ayvazian
Mr. John G. Ayvazian
Ms. Kim Kardashian

Ararat Home acknowledges these gifts
with immense gratitude.



CASINO NIGHT VII, Fun With Friends

By Cindy Kaloostian

No tuxedos, no pressure, no charge for parking, no hurry, no worry, just delicious food, exciting games, valuable prizes, smiling friends and fun... that's the way we roll at the annual Ararat Home Casino Night. **Casino Night VII** last November was no exception. **Casino Night VIII** on November 19, 2011 will be even more spectacular.

Chairman Gary Kaloostian pushed and pushed to get a 3-Card-Poker table, something the supplier did not have in stock. Committee Member Kathleen Kurkjian called and cajoled the supplier into purchasing one and renting it to the Ararat Home. It arrived the very week of **Casino Night VII** and was a huge hit. Gary is now determined to get a second 3-Card-Poker table for **Casino Night VIII**, which will be held on Saturday **November 19, 2011** so more of us (including Gary) will have a chance to learn how to play. Of course all the usual favorites... Black Jack, Craps, Roulette, Texas Hold 'Em and more will be there. If you haven't joined the fun in previous years, 2011 is your perfect opportunity. Look for details in the mail after the **Annual Picnic**, which will be held on Sunday **September 25, 2011**.

Heard a Great Performer Lately? Tell the Ararat Home

By Phyllis Hamo

Have you heard a great singer lately, seen an outstanding dancer or musician, or someone who would be willing to donate their time and talent to perform on the first Tuesday of the month at the Ararat Home?

If you had attended every luncheon last year you would have been blessed by pastors, priests, and laymen who offered wonderful prayers and devotionals, beautiful music, beautiful voices, poetry and comedy. You would have been entertained by the Glendale based Holy Trinity Armenian Evangelical Church Choir along with an invocation by their pastor Rev. Berdj Djambazian. You would have been entertained and danced to the music played by Tom Bozigian and his ensemble. Bozigian with over 45 years of performance experience is recognized worldwide as a professional dancer-choreographer, linguist, singer, and musician.

Tenor Raffi Kerbabian, choir member and soloist at the United Armenian Congregational Church, headlined the Mother's Day luncheon and honored mothers musically both in Armenian and English. At another luncheon you would have heard the beautiful piano music of Karine Nazaretyan Ginzburg and, at another, soprano Heghine Harboyan who is as sweet as the music she sings. Heghine is a soloist at the Holy Cross Armenian Apostolic Cathedral in Montebello.

During the Veteran's Day program, following the flag salute proudly led by military veteran Leo Keligian, Guy and Arshag Chookoorian sang and played and soprano Capri Mugerdechian Compton generously lent her lovely operatic voice to the Ararat stage.

Thanks to arrangements made by past board member and volunteer Robert Tuncer, the Los Angeles Opera Company also performed at the Home accompanied by soprano Narine Ojakhyan, renowned in Armenia, Europe and Asia. Another performance was by celebrated songwriter and composer, Adiss Harmandyan, known as the international pioneer of Armenian pop songs. He has released more than 30 albums worldwide including such famous hits as "Nouné," "Karoun Karoun," and "Dzaghigier". Those in attendance joined in with excitement singing along and dancing.

A talented non-musical performer at the Home was comic Krikor Satamian, actor, comedian and director of stage and screen. Satamian



His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, pays a surprise visit to the Ladies' Auxiliary at Ararat Home. Seated – Margaret Abrahamian, Sue Abrahamian, Dianne Ohanesian, Lillian Garabedian. Standing – Lucy Hovsepian, Alice Bedrosian, Beatrice Casparian, His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Alice Kavaldjian, Debbie Avedian, Agnes Boghosian, Vernalie Deirmenjian, Jenny Kurkjian & Chairman Nazar H. Ashjian, Jr.

has directed 75 plays and three operettas, acted in 85 plays and several television sitcoms, among them "Suddenly Susan," "Team Knight Rider" and "Mad TV." He has had supporting roles in such movies as "Subterfuge," "Pedestrians," "Enemies of Laughter," "After Freedom," "Pomegranate," "The Naked Truth" and "Must Love Dogs".

Another major draw to our luncheons is the performance by the "Element Band" who sing traditional Armenian folk songs and play international music with a contemporary flare. According to Sue Abrahamian, responsible for scheduling the entertainers, "when the "Element Band" performed, the ballroom was packed with enthusiastic attendees."

Ararat Home welcomes any recommendations for volunteers who are willing to volunteer their time and talent. Please contact Beatrice Malkhasian at the Ararat Home at (818) 838-4860 for your suggestions, and anyone wishing to become a sponsor for a monthly luncheon, please contact Dianne Ohanesian at (818) 349-5824.

The Ararat Home Women's Auxiliary organizes the monthly luncheons. Dedicated volunteers who happily participate each month serve their traditional chicken, pilaf and string beans lunch, prepared by Ararat chefs. The lunch is served at noon on the first Tuesday of each month. The cost of lunch is \$15 per person and sponsors are always welcome to help underwrite the luncheons at \$300. You may sponsor "in honor of" or "in memory of" a loved one or to help provide a safe home and shelter for the elderly and infirm.

Ararat Museum Upcoming Events

Sunday, May 15, 2011

"An illustrated tour of Historical Armenian Lands" taken by Photo Shiraz in the early 1960's this is an illustrated talk in English by Haroot Der Tavitian.

FREE ADMISSION

Sunday, May 22, 2011

Ararat Home Valley Guild presents Antique Collectibles A presentation by William Notovotny, ISA AM will take place at Ararat Eskijian Museum at 2pm

ADMISSION FEE \$25.00

Sunday, June 5, 2011

Multimedia CD-ROM, entitled "**Komitas Vardapet: His Life and Works**" by Garegin M. Chugaszyan, Executive Director of the Information Technology Foundation*, Yerevan, Armenia.

ADMISSION FREE

Sunday, June 26th

"**Armenians on the Titanic**" and a short vignette of a "**Blood Stained Bible**" from Urfa and its connection to State Department's denial of the Armenian Genocide.

ADMISSION FREE

ARARAT HIGHLIGHTS

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